

THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF BLORE HEATH.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1909.

To the Rural District Council of Blore Heath.
Gentlemen,—

I have the honour of presenting my Annual Report upon the health of your district for the year ending 31st December, 1909. The birth-rate of 28.8 is the highest recorded since 1897, and the death-rate of 16.3 the highest since 1900. Except at Hales, where an epidemic of whooping-cough occurred in the Spring, and an outbreak of scarlet fever in October, the district was very free from infectious disease.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

The Rural Sanitary District of Blore Heath has an area of upwards of 13,660 acres, and comprises the three parishes of Ashley, Mucklestone, and Tyrley. The parishes of Mucklestone and Tyrley include some very fertile, highly-cultivated land, but as these parishes rise towards that of Ashley the land becomes poorer in quality. At Ashley begin the moorlands of Staffordshire, the Southern extremity of the Pennine Range. Ashley Heath is upwards of 750 feet above sea level, and is the highest cultivated table land in England. The trend of the drainage of the district is for the most part westward to the River Tern, except the eastern portion of Ashley parish, which is drained by tributaries of the River Sow. The springs forming the source of the Market Drayton Water Company's supply are situate in the Burnt Woods. The mains run through the fields upon which the battle of Blore Heath was fought in 1459.

VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATION.—The population of the district at the last census (1901) was 2,141. The estimated population at the middle of 1909 was 2,080. The natural increase of population (that is, the excess of births over deaths) during the year was 25. When the last census was taken the

number of inhabited houses in the district was 466, and the average number of persons in each house was 4.5.

MARRIAGES.—Nine marriages were registered during the year.

BIRTHS.—Sixty children were born and registered in the year. Of these five were illegitimate. The birth-rate, the highest recorded for many years, was 28.8 per 1,000 of the estimated population. The average rate for the previous ten years was 23.3 per 1,000.

DEATHS.—Thirty-four deaths were registered in the district in the year, and one “resident” died in an institution outside the district, making a total of 35 deaths in the year—equal to a death-rate of 16.8 per 1,000 of the estimated population. The average death-rate for the previous ten years was 12.7 per 1,000.

CLASSIFICATION OF DEATHS.—Of the 35 deaths 14 were persons of the age of 65 and upwards, and five were under 5. Eight deaths were certified as due to heart disease, five to bronchitis, three to pneumonia, and four to cancer. There were 2 deaths due to accidents. Only one death from infectious disease (whooping-cough) was registered, and only one infant under one year died during the twelve months.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Sixteen cases of infectious disease were notified to me during the year, viz., 12 of scarlet fever and 4 of diphtheria. Nine of the scarlet fever cases occurred in connection with an outbreak at Hales, 4 children being infected in one house. All the cases were efficiently isolated, and the epidemic was checked without having recourse to the closure of the schools. Three of the four diphtheria, and three of the scarlet fever cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital.

The Council Schools at Hales were closed from the 29th January until the 8th April in consequence of the prevalence of whooping cough among the children.

Measles and whooping cough are not included in the list of notifiable infectious diseases. Pulmonary tuberculosis (consumption) is notifiable voluntarily since 1900, but very few cases have been notified. In cases of death from consumption notice of the disinfection necessary is sent to the representatives of the deceased. In all

cases of infectious disease notified to me printed instructions are at once sent to the occupiers of infected houses, suggesting the precautions to be taken in order to check the spread of contagion. At the termination of all cases, disinfection and efficient cleansing of the infected rooms have been carried out under the direction of the Sanitary Inspector. School teachers are notified of the occurrence of notifiable infectious disease and children from infected houses are excluded from school.

VACCINATION.—The following statistics of vaccination in your district have been furnished to me by the Vaccination Officers:—Of the sixty children born and registered, 47 were successfully vaccinated. The vaccination of 3 was postponed by medical certificate, two children were removed from the district, three were not of age at the end of the year, and five remain unvaccinated because their parents had conscientious objections to vaccination, and made legal declarations to that effect.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.—This is adequate to the population, which is steadily decreasing. The houses generally are in a satisfactory condition. Where unsanitary conditions are found to exist, they are brought to the attention of the Council by the Sanitary Inspector or myself.

WATER SUPPLY.—This is chiefly from pumps, shallow wells, and draw-wells. The village of Aston has a public supply of good water. During the summer the supply partially failed for a short time, and an outbreak of diarrhoea was probably caused by some of the villagers using water from sources which had been previously condemned as unfit for use. In the year I analysed ten samples of drinking water, of which four were unfit to use for drinking purposes.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.—The application of this Act is very limited in the district, there being only a few workshops (wheelwrights and blacksmiths), one small cheese factory, and one bakehouse. The Home Office official table is affixed.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILKSHOPS ORDER (1886).—The regulations of this Order were adopted by the Council, and came into

force on 1st May, 1907. The number of milk-sellers on the register is 20, and inspections of the dairies, etc., are now regularly made.

NUISANCES, ETC.—A summary of the work done by your Sanitary Inspector is given in a table at the end of this report.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

A. MACQUEEN, M.D.

Market Drayton, 22nd March, 1910.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK done in the Nuisance Inspector's Department during the year 1909, in the Rural District of Blore Heath:—

Number of inspections and observations made, 145.

Number of defects found:—

Dwelling-houses and Schools:

Structural Defects	21
Overcrowding..	5
Dairies and Milkshops	6
Cowsheds	14
Ashpits and Privies	22
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	5
House Drainage:	
Defective Traps	16
No Disconnection	5
Other Faults	43
Water Supply	46
Pigsties	17
Other Nuisances	36

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Abatement Notices: Informal by Inspector, 25; Formal by Authority, 15.

Nuisances Abated after Notice by Inspector, 96; Authority, 26.

Food and Drugs Act:

Samples of Water taken for Analysis ... 10
Do Condemned as unfit for use... 4

Precautions against Infectious Disease:

Lots of Infected Bedding Disinfected or Destroyed ... } 12
Houses Disinfected after Infectious Disease }

(Signed) HUGH JONES,

Inspector of Nuisances.

21st March, 1910.